

**UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF STEPHEN O'BRIEN APPALLED BY
CONTINUING DISREGARD FOR HUMAN LIFE IN YEMEN: CALLS FOR
IMMEDIATE & UNIMPEDED HUMANITARIAN ACCESS**

(New York, 07 July 2015) I continue to be extremely worried by the humanitarian situation unfolding across Yemen. Over 3,260 people have been killed and nearly 1.3 million have been displaced since March. Millions are facing the threat of famine because food assistance is not reaching them, and countless wounded are dying because hospitals are closing down due to lack of fuel.

The United Nations and partners have stressed many times in the last few months that civilians must be protected, that humanitarian aid must be allowed through and that the fighting must stop.

In the last few days I and my colleagues have received reports of attacks on a kindergarten housing refugees in Aden and markets in Lahj, Amran and Hajjah, and of rockets fired at civilian neighbourhoods in Aden. This is in addition to recent attacks on medical facilities, IDP registration sites and humanitarian premises in Sa'ada and other places.

If these reports are verified, they give an indication of a clear disregard for human lives by the parties to this conflict and the emptiness of statements of concern.

Under international human rights and humanitarian laws all parties to the conflict must respect their obligations to protect civilians. All those in the international community with influence on the parties to the conflict must also shoulder their responsibilities and do their utmost to protect civilians caught in the middle of this appalling situation.

I call on all parties to agree an immediate and unconditional humanitarian pause across the country.

Civilians must be allowed to move to safer areas without fear of attack and humanitarian agencies must have safe and unhindered access so that they can treat the wounded, and deliver life-saving treatment and supplies in any areas where fighting is ongoing.

While others seek a sustainable political solution, the humanitarian community continues to race against the clock, focusing only on bringing vital water, food, fuel, medical supplies and other life-saving support to people in desperate need. However, much more needs to be done. Without full, immediate and unimpeded access to ports, and sufficient funding, aid agencies cannot provide the critical help that tens of millions of people need.

We must show the children, women and men of Yemen that the world has not forgotten them. Our urgent priority is to seek an unconditional humanitarian pause so that we can help save lives and protect communities.

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